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[Variations, piano, WoO 80, C minor]
Thirty-two variations on an original theme

M
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B44
WoO 80
1920
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BEETHOVEN

THIRTY-TWO VARIATIONS

On an Original Theme

IN C MINOR

For Piano

(Von Bülow)

Price, 75 cents



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THIRTY-TWO VARIATIONS

On an Original Theme

IN C MINOR

For Piano

By

Ludwig Van Beethoven

Edited and Fingered by

HANS VON BÜLOW

G. SCHIRMER, INC., NEW YORK

Harvey Olnick

Printed in the U. S. A.

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Thirty-two Variations

on an

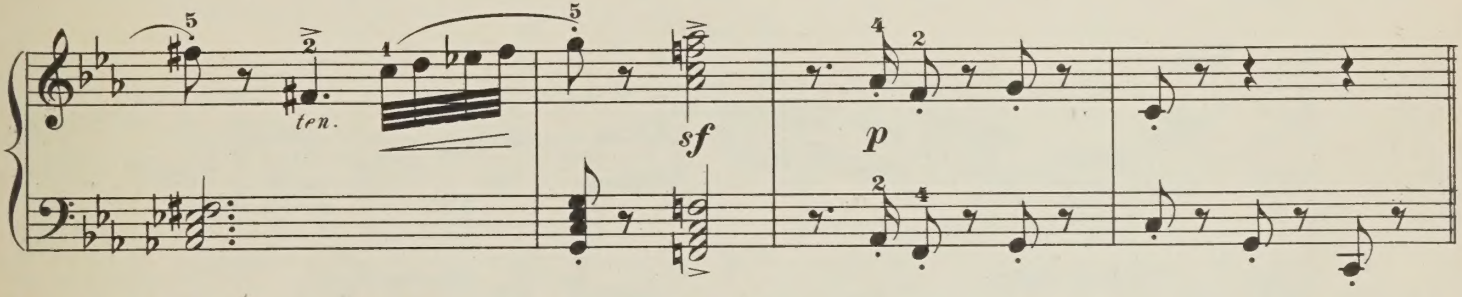
Original Theme
in C minor.

Edited and fingered by
HANS von BÜLOW.

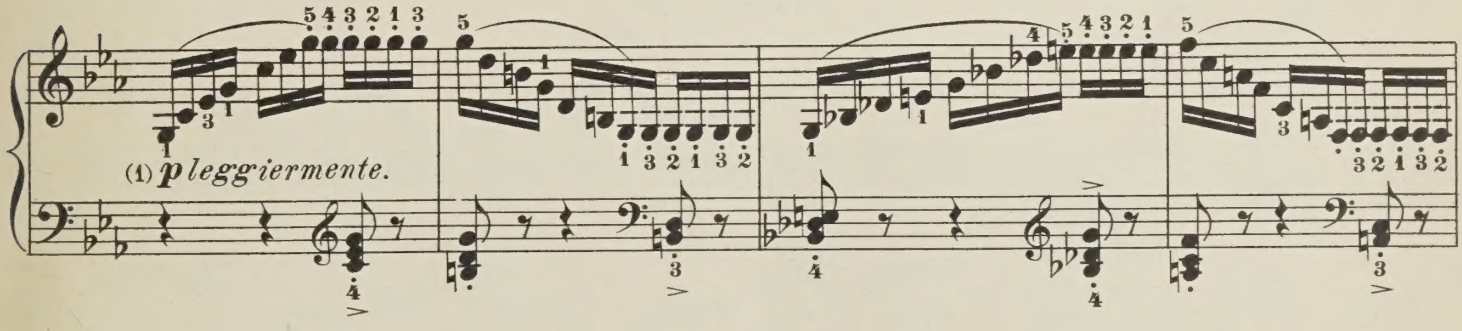
L. van BEETHOVEN.

Allegretto. (♩=100-104)





Var. I.





(1) As already observed in the Preface, the first chief group of the Variations (I to XI inclusive) is to be played in as flowing a connection as possible. This does not hinder us from dissecting this group into subdivisions, according to the simple principle of connecting the similar and separating the dissimilar. According to this, the first three Variations may be played without any break, like a single Variation, (and for this a mode of playing as quiet as possible and free from pathos is recommended,) — in which each time only the second quarter-note of the sixth measure is to be marked by a special accent. In this manner is produced an effective contrast to the impressive style becoming the theme, preparing a dramatic intensification up to the entry of the "Maggiore."

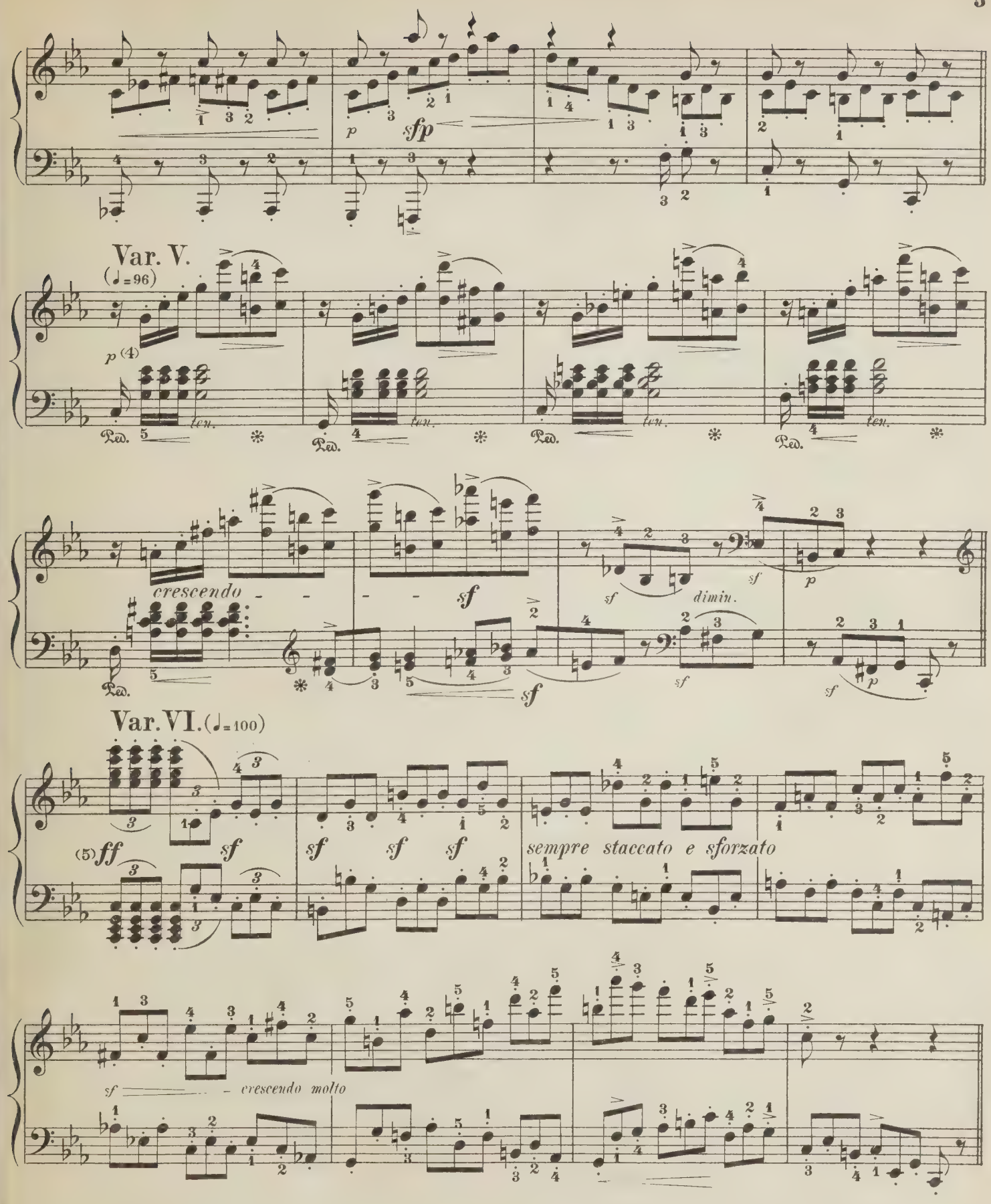
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(2) A slight dwelling on the first note of measures 1, 3 and 5 is advisable, to avoid dryness.

(3) Variations IV to VI can again be conceived as a subdivision belonging together. The middle one forms a kind of Alternativo (Trio) between the two others, which have a bond of union in the triplet-rhythm common to both.



(4) The motive of this Variation must be treated somewhat freely in *tempo,* that is, its two fundamentally different portions must be kept apart. Hasten a little over the first half of the measure and delay in the second; press on, lastly, in even *tempo* with the imitations from the sixth measure to the end — but not hurriedly.

(5) This Variation must be played strictly in time, and in not more precipitate movement than the rest; the "fire" of the execution can be brought out by a sharp *staccato* and *sforzato*.

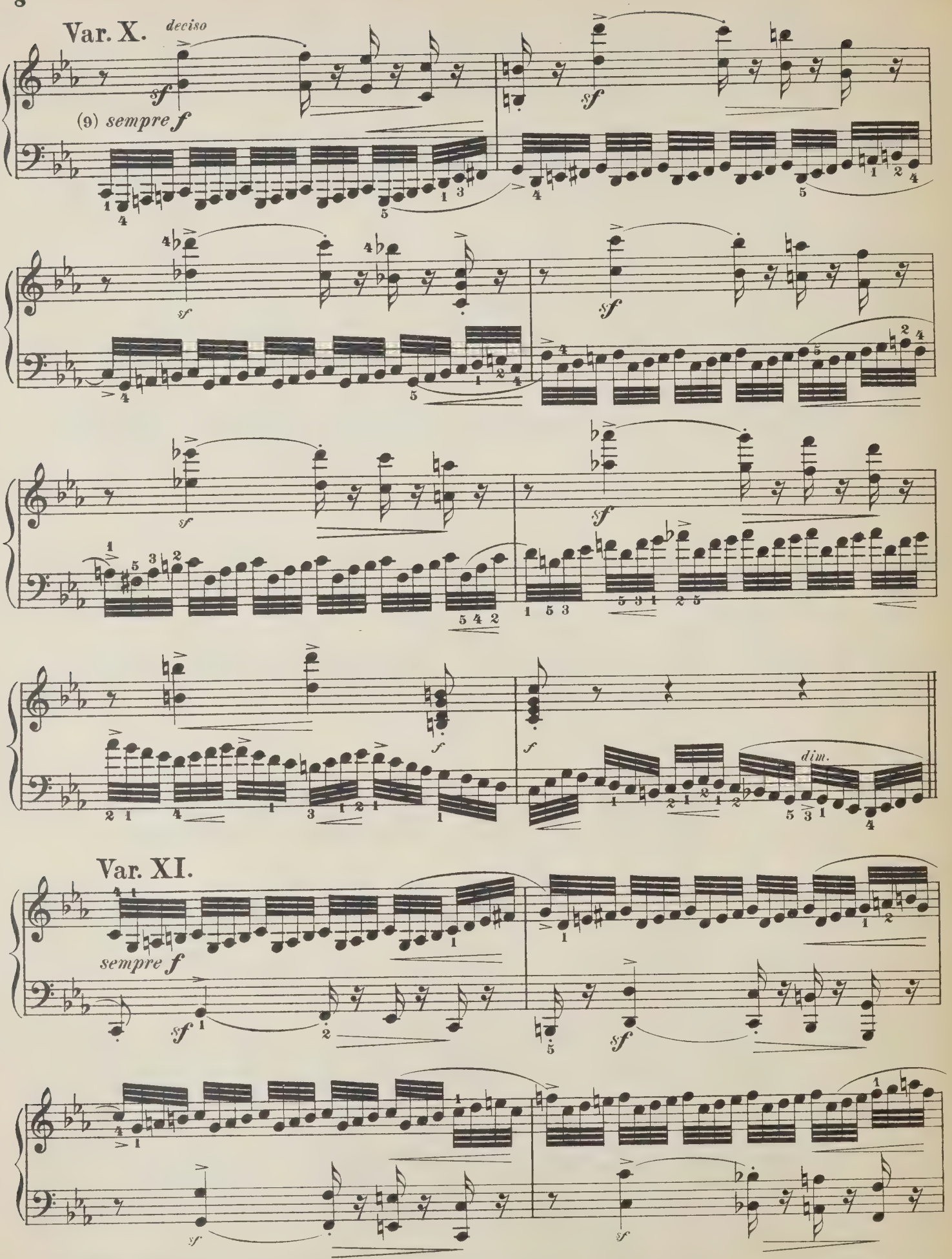


(6) The five following variations can also be included in a common group; Variation IX takes the same position in regard to the pairs inclosing it, as Variation V does in the preceding group. See Note 3.

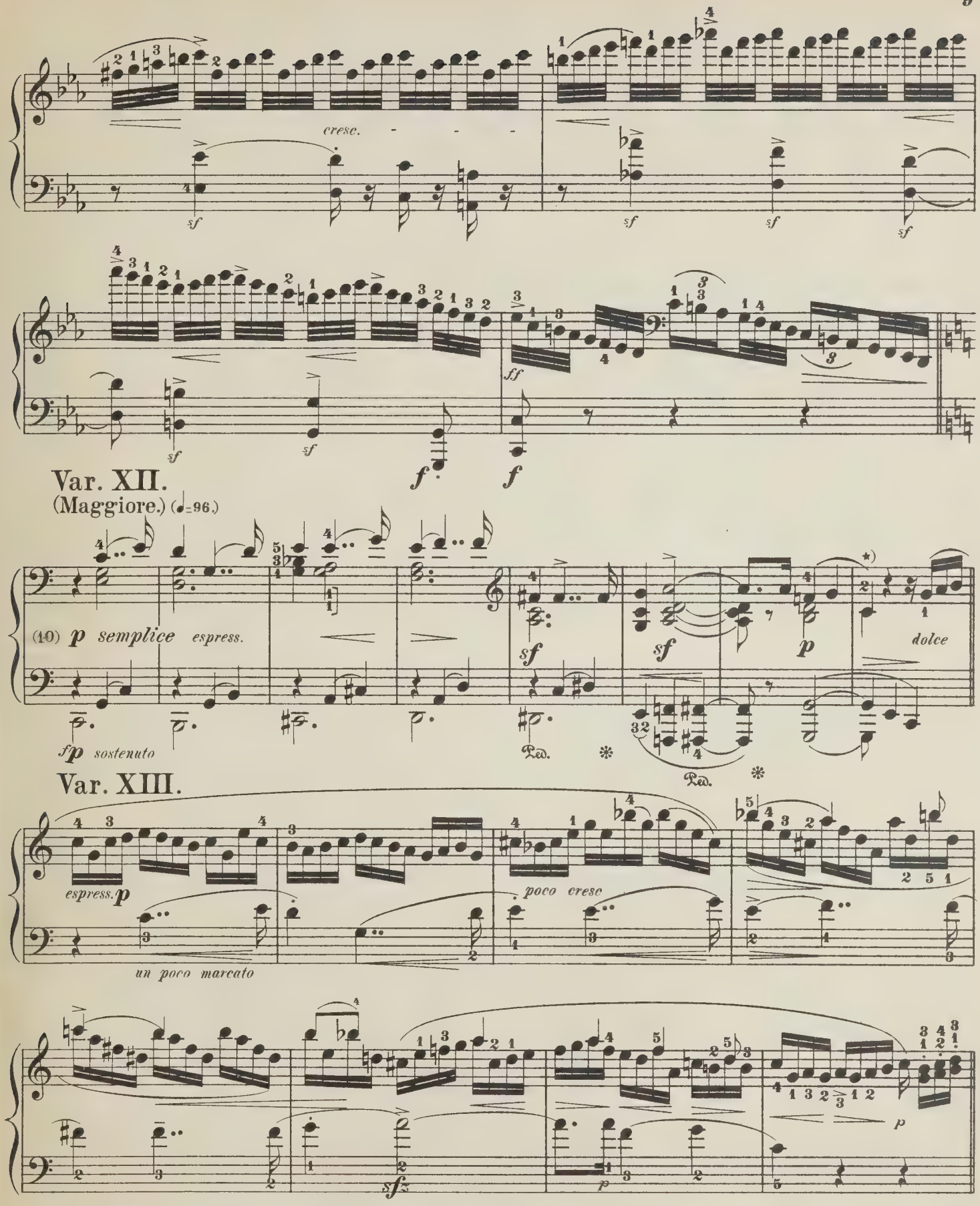
(7) On first studying this, it will be advisable to slur together every two 16th-notes in order to bring out the 8th-note octave-progression in the required prominence; but this separation must not, in actual execution, injure the *martellato* character of the figure. The first bass note (as also in the preceding Variation) must be brought out plainly isolated.



(8) From the last quarter-note of the seventh measure onward, there stands in the original, instead of the double triplet, a trill, which in such cases is apt to puzzle many players. We consider it only as an abbreviation used by the author, which includes the suggestion of a seventh transition-note. The genuineness of the eighth-note G in the higher part leaves room for doubt. Thematically, the preceding quarter-note should descend to C; a repetition of the tone is by no means to be recommended.



(9) *"Sempre forte"* stands at the beginning of each of the two following Variations; however, we should think it no fault to begin *piano*, and then to increase by degrees so as to extend the *crescendo* to Var. XII. The 32nd notes will roll on more smoothly if the player executes them as little *legato* as is consistent with the tempo.



*) Other editions, an eighth-note followed by an eighth-rest.

(10) The theme in major, although in outward construction nearly identical with the prototype, has, as here contrasted with it, exactly the significance which belongs to the second so-called *lyrical* motive in the Sonata-movement. The following four major Variations are also to be conceived as *lyrical*, that is, melodious; naturally without overdrawn sentimentality, and also without essential departure from the real tempo, which, by a slight retardation, can be restored to just the same extent as the player was fully justified, in the preceding Variations, in allowing himself to be somewhat carried away.

Var. XIV.

Un poco vivace.

sempre staccato

sf *dimin.* *p con grazia*

Var. XV.

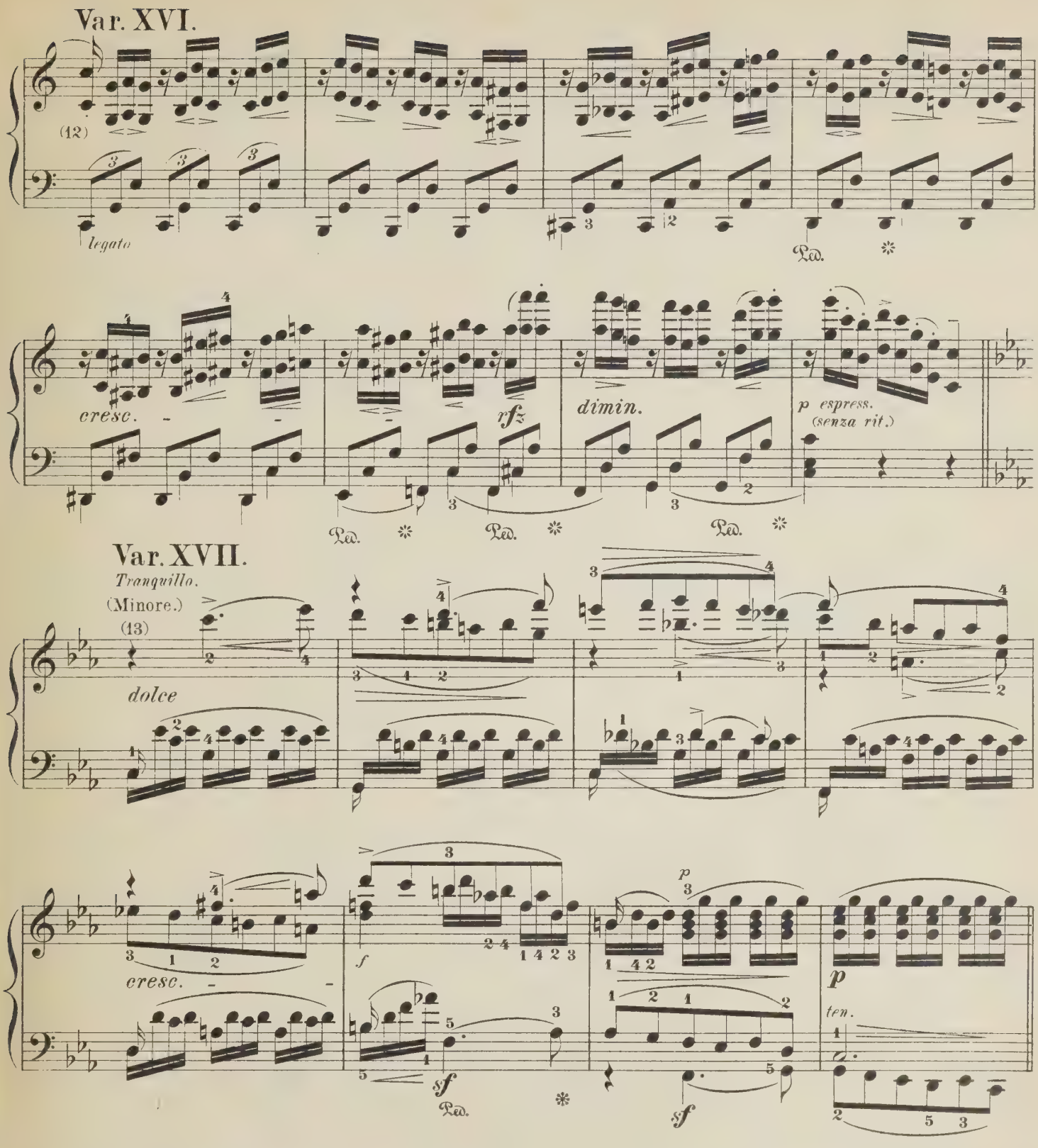
Tranquillo. (♩=92.)

(11) *dolce*

cresc. *risoluto* *dimin.* *p grazioso*

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

(11) In similar repeated passages which contain only chord-intervals, the player must take care not to mark the bass note — except on its first occurence — otherwise a paralyzing influence is apt to be exerted on the progress of the highest part. On the other hand, the fundamental notes and the middle parts may, where practicable, be held over their proper value in order to give to the whole a greater fullness of sound. Our method of writing contains hints, which a sense of harmony and of the harmonious correlation of the single parts might expand into still greater variety of expression.

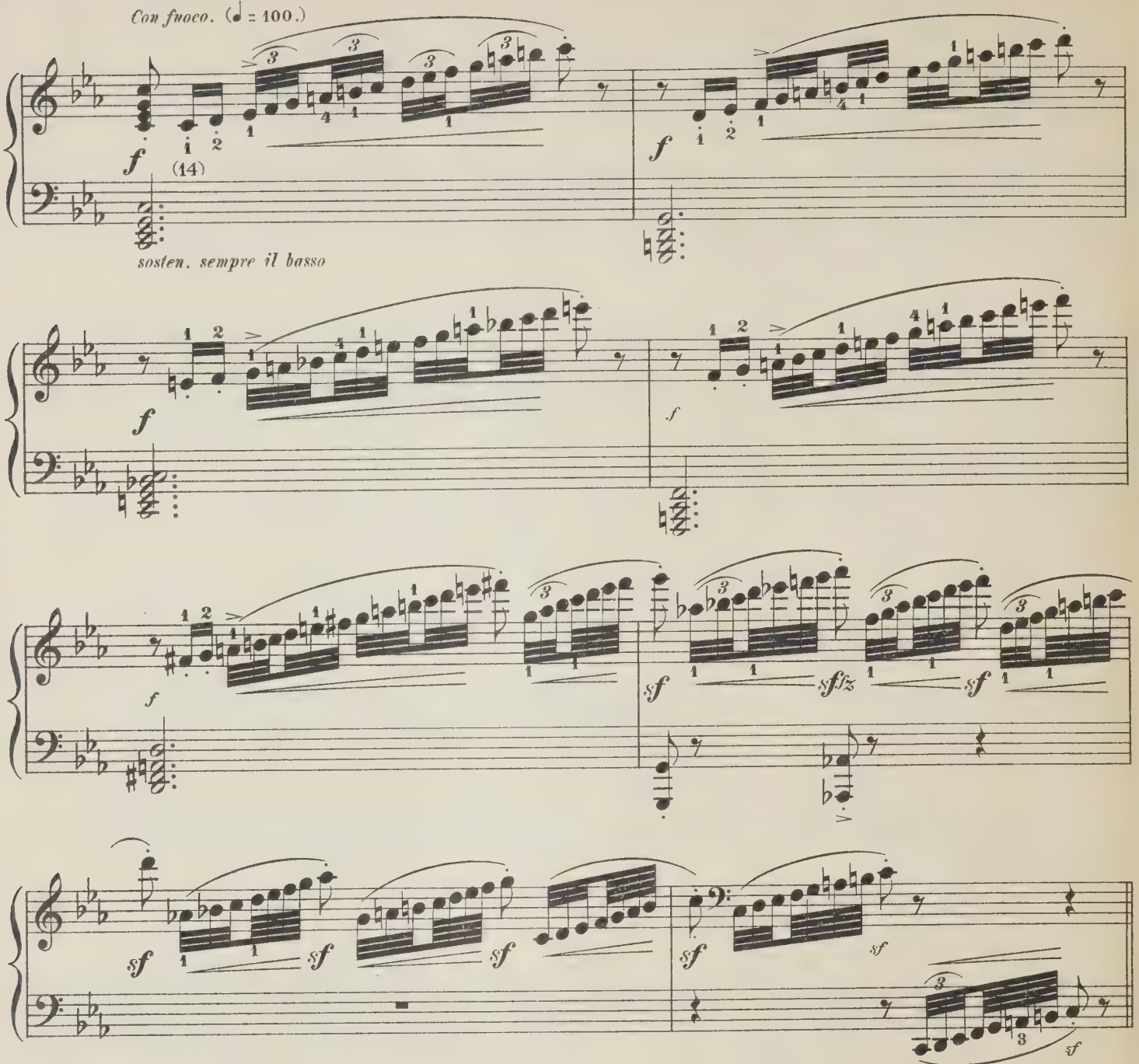


(12) This Variation, which is fundamentally identical with the preceding one, and intensifies the execution of the melodious figuration solely by rhythmic animation (division of the syncopation and alteration of the three-part metre into four-part), must be closely connected with it. The tranquil flow of the bass remains uninterrupted, to offer an equilibrium against the insistent melody whose octave-passages have to maintain a mean between *legato* and *staccato*. The use of the pedal is allowed, with careful maintenance of the undisturbed sequence of Harmony, which necessitates frequent change.

(13) This "free" Canon occupies a *mediating* position. It attaches itself to the preceding variation by the continuation of the *lyrical* moment, while, by the return to the minor key, it also prepares for that "harsh" brilliancy of the immediately succeeding minor group of the five Variations XVIII to XXII (incl.), which characterizes the fundamental mood of the whole work. Of course, each imitating part must be plainly brought out.

Var. XVIII.

Con fuoco. (♩ = 100.)



Var. XIX.

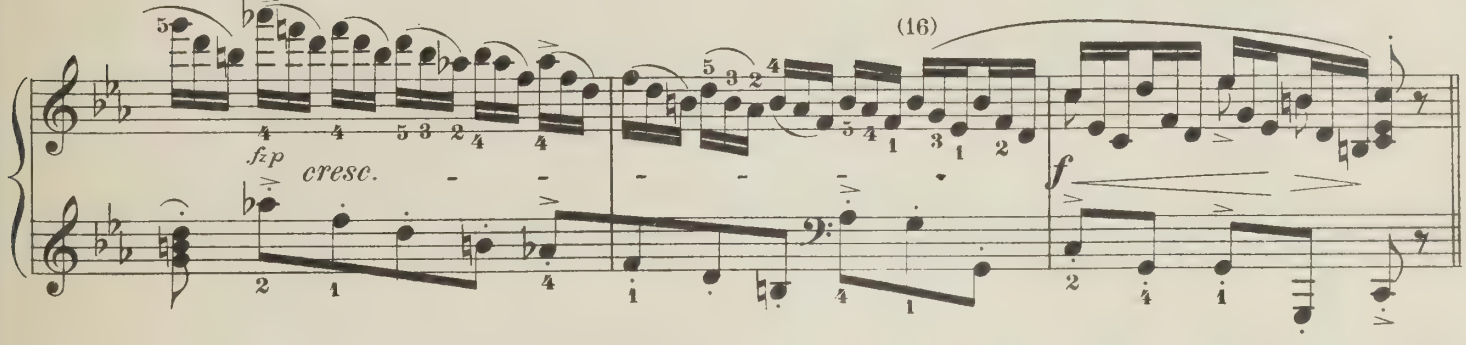


*) Other Editions have a quarter-note here.

(14) By playing the first two 16th-notes *staccato,* this somewhat insipid scale-exercise appears to us to gain a characteristic interest.

(15) The abrupt dynamic contrast is marked by the author with such consistency and persistency, that every alteration seems inadmissible. In order to render it exactly, it is advisable to play only the second half of each measure *legato*.





Var. XX.





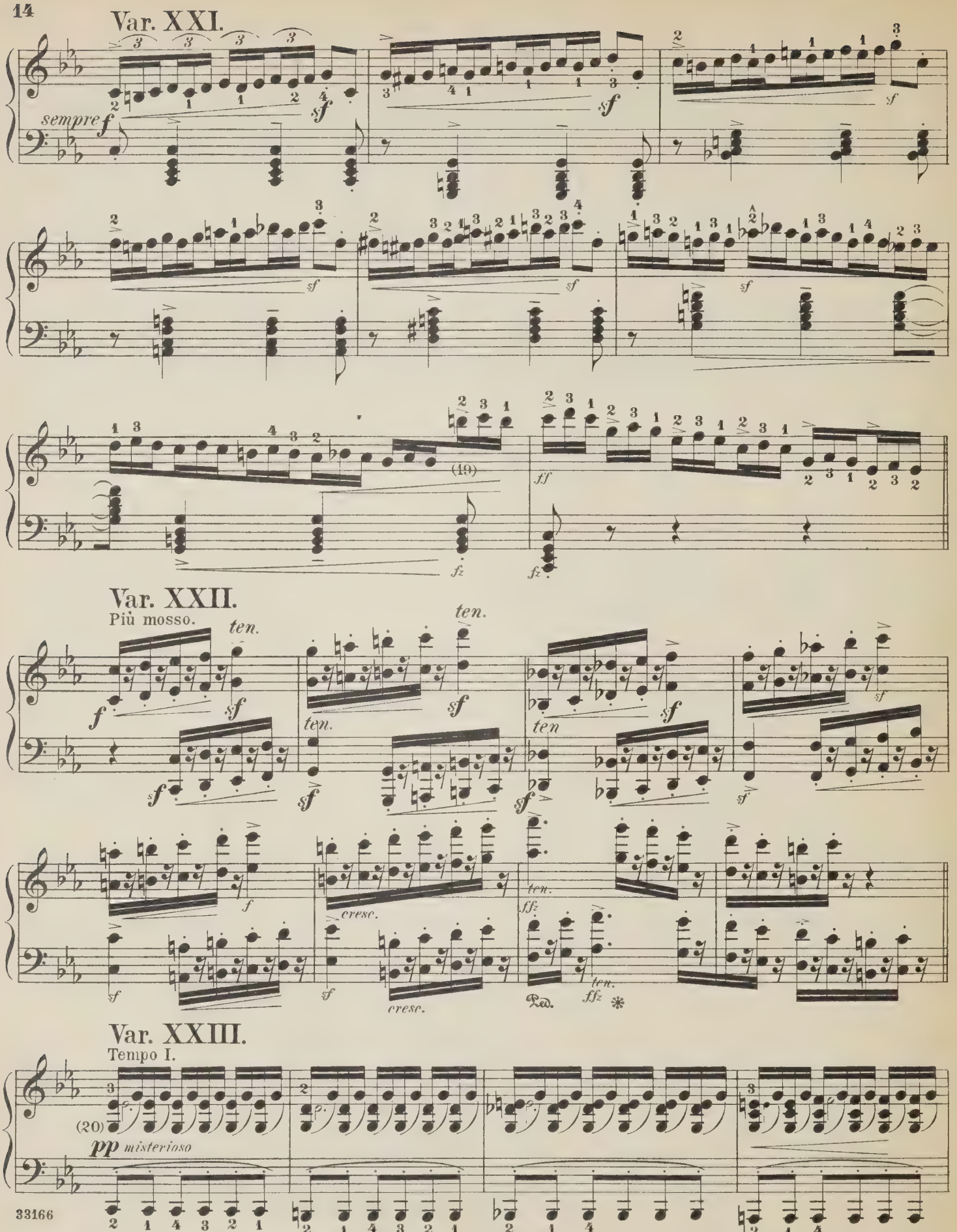


(16) The fifth eighth-note in the highest part is b, not c, as is erroneously found in all late Editions.

(17) The *sempre forte* is to be taken very literally in the three next Variations; it is to extend, also, to the concluding eighth-note of each measure, and in both hands.

(18) By apportioning these six notes to the right hand a weakening of the left hand is avoided; but the change must be effected very skilfully, so as not to be observed by the listener.

*) Other Editions have here  instead of 



(19) This fingering, which appears stranger to the eye than in practice, and which is also very serviceable in the G major Concerto, Op. 58, can be employed at pleasure from the sixth measure on.

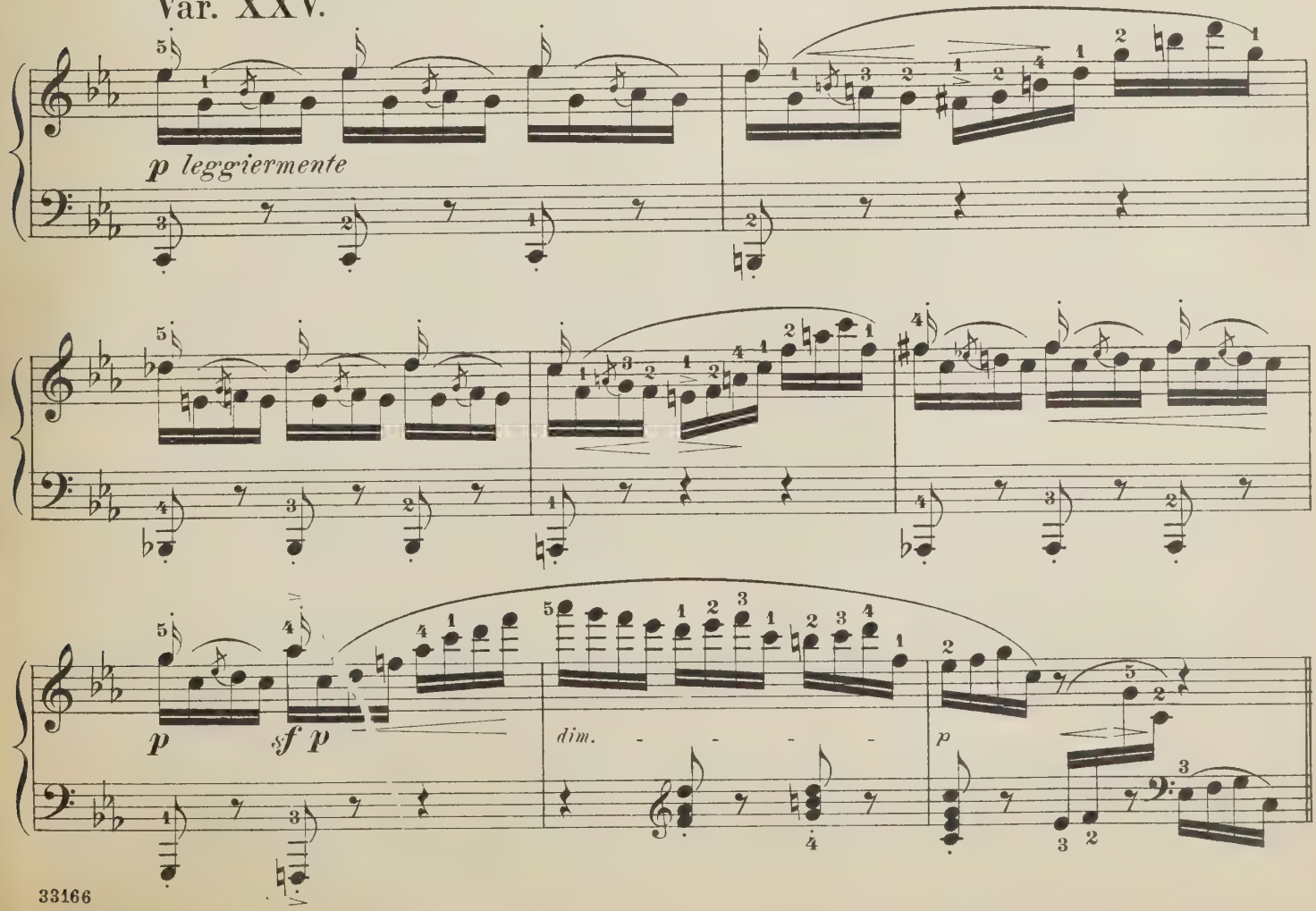
(20) Variations XXIII to XXV are, manifestly, another special group, and must form an extreme contrast to the preceding passionate raging, without any apparent diminution of movement. The binding of each two notes in the right hand is specially to be remarked; next to the uniform bringing out of the Organ-point G in the middle part — it has less importance in the highest part — attention should be directed to the melodious motion, as marked in small notes from e flat to a flat (*sf*). In the bass, each third eighth-note (in the last two measures naturally also the fifth) demands a slight accent, to which both the composition and the fingering point.



Var. XXIV.



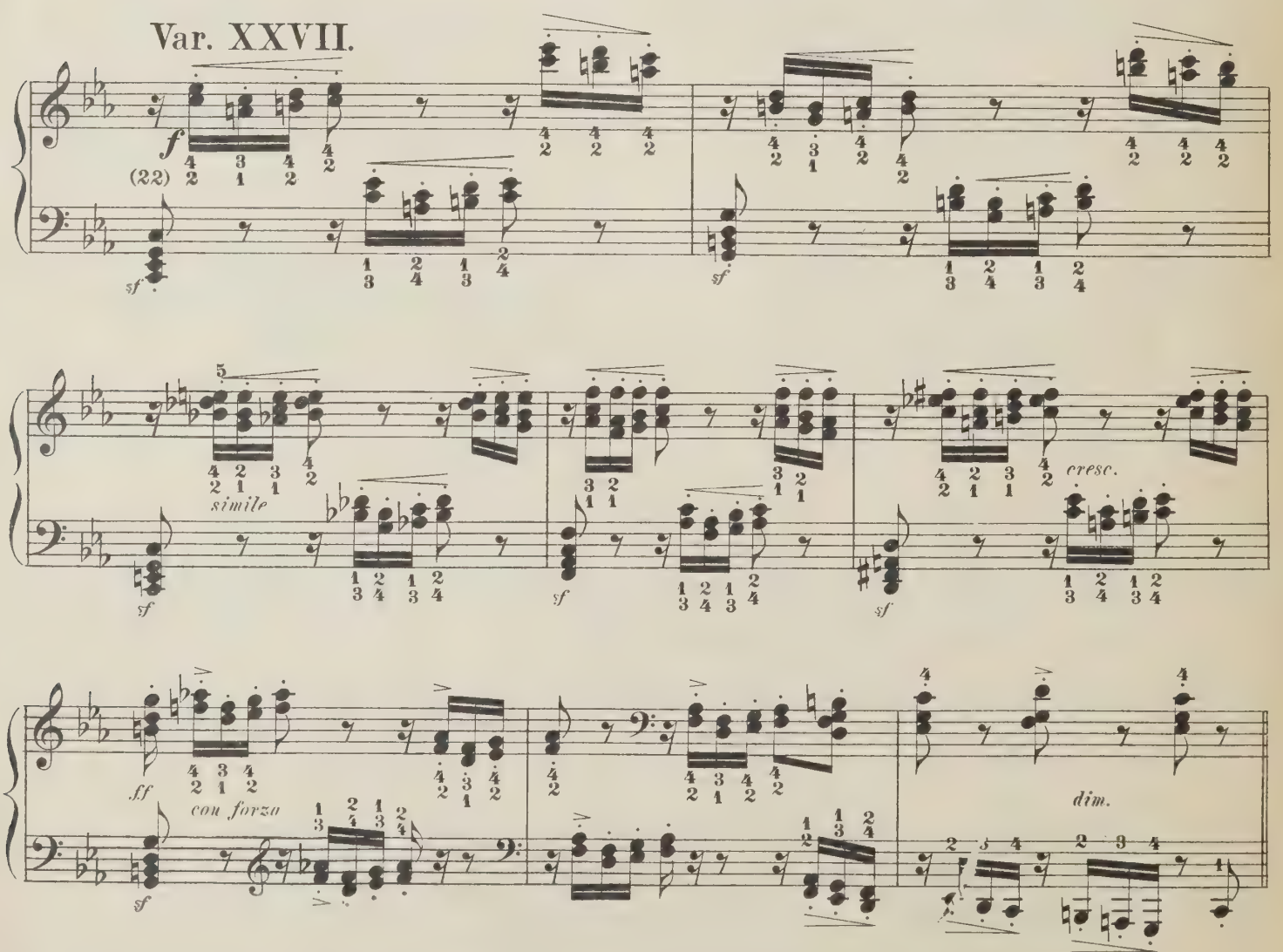
Var. XXV.



(21) Var. XXVI.



Var. XXVII.



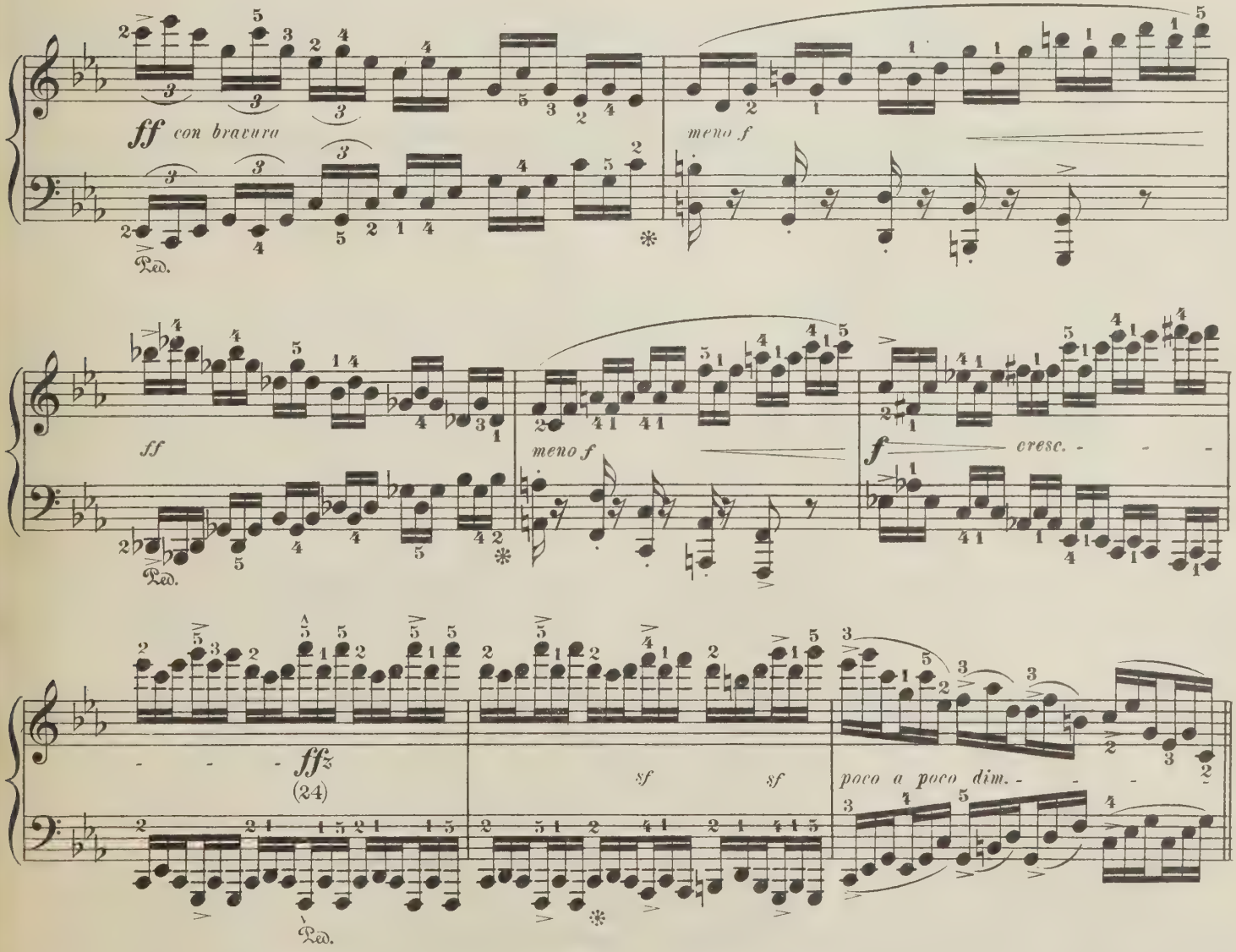
(21) Although many sharp contrasts are contained in the next five Variations, it is advisable to play them also in close connection, as just by means of the unbroken flow that "close attention" is best inspired which must precede the Finale, which already begins with Var. XXXI.

(22) This Variation must be played with yet greater "virtuosity" than the preceding one, in which the player would therefore do well not to exhaust his strength.

Var. XXVIII.

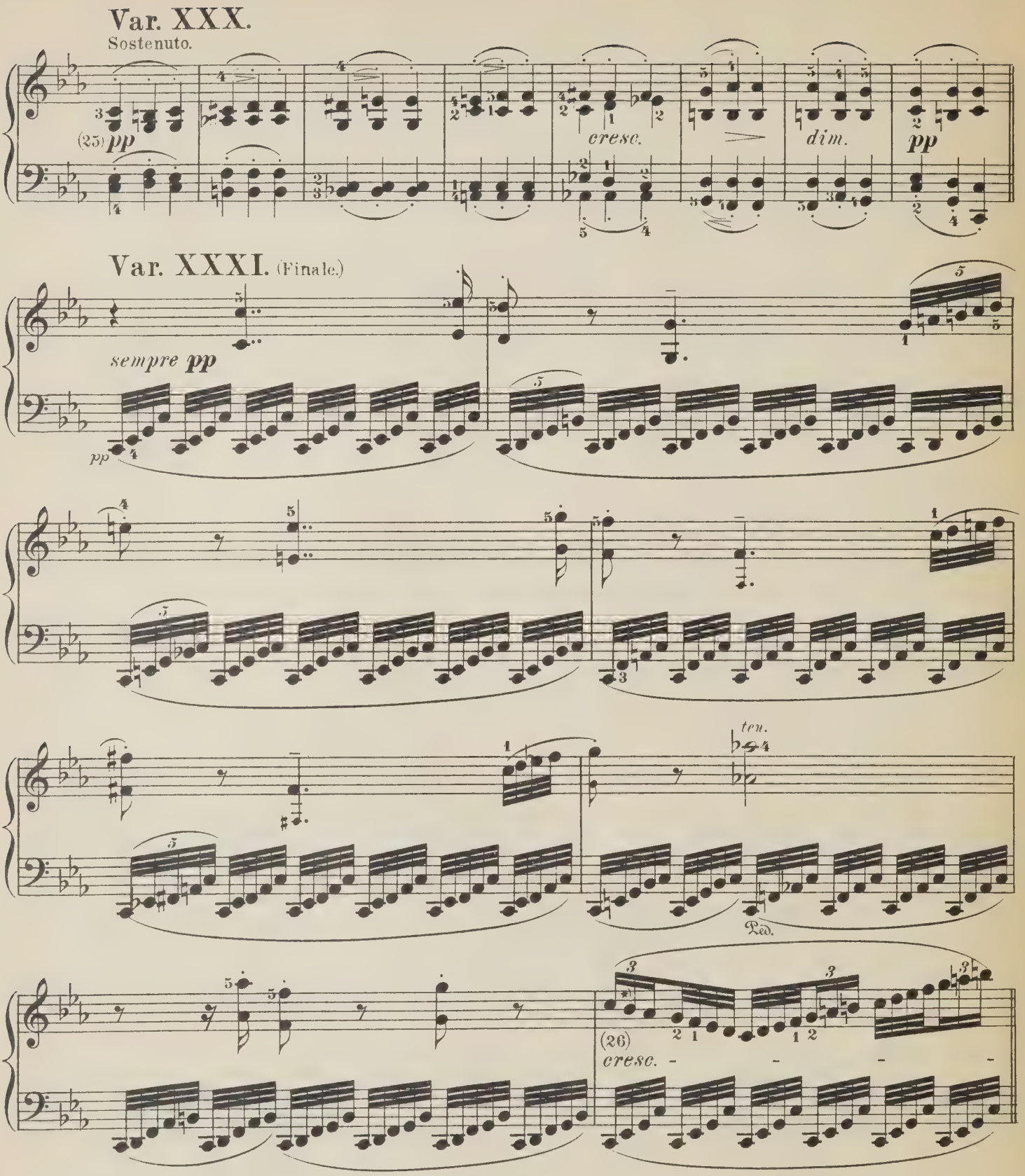


Var. XXIX.



(23) Here the tempo must not be relaxed in the least, as these longer notes have in themselves the requisite tranquility. See Notes 3 and 6 on the relation of this Variation to those surrounding it.

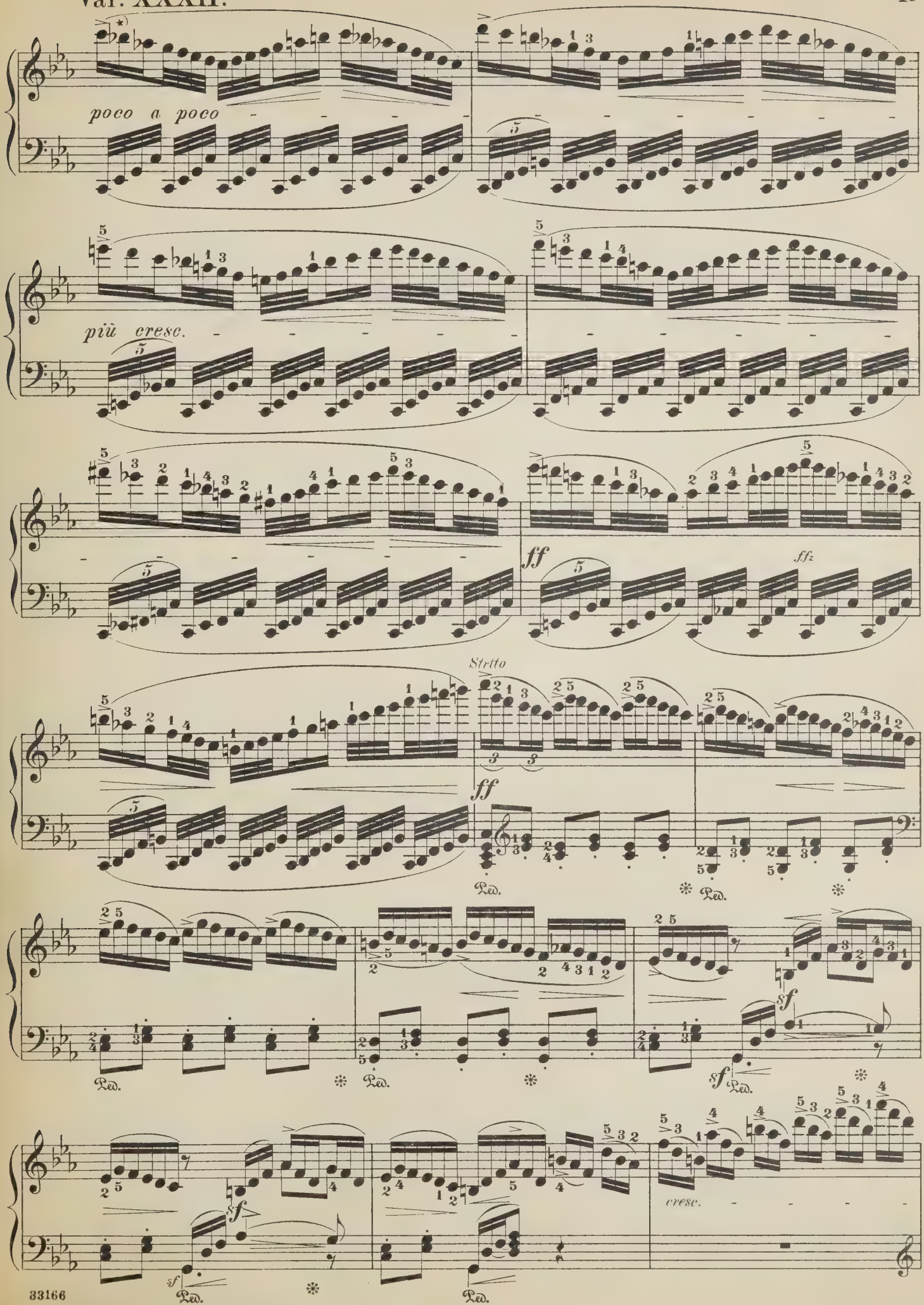
(24) The use of the thumb in both hands on the fifth 16th-note will facilitate the execution of the *sforzato*, as well as spur the player to a more animated movement for the whole tremolo.



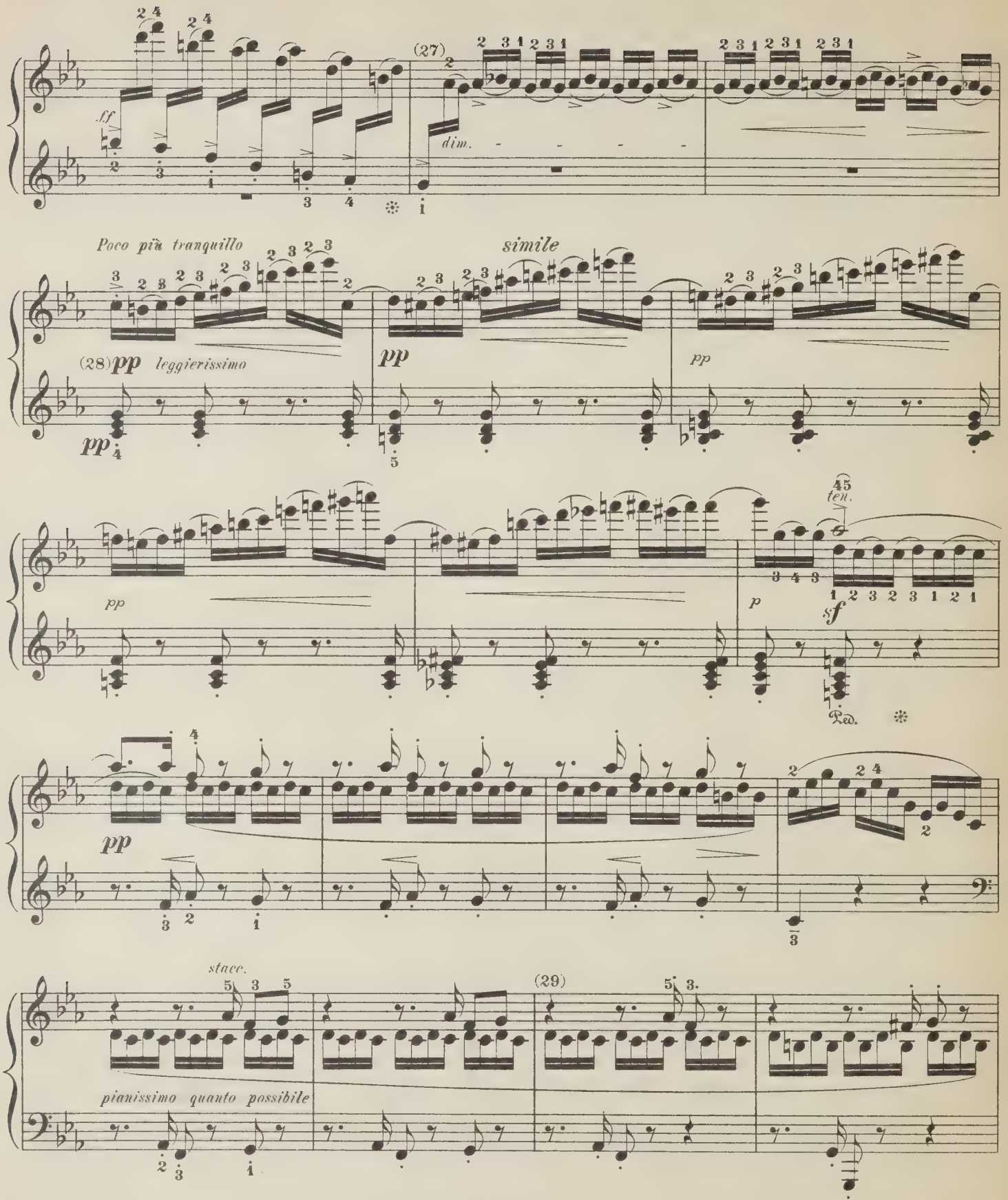
*) B♮ and A♮ in other editions.

(25) This (in a certain sense the last) Variation is to be played very *sostenuto* and earnestly (but anything rather than tediously). In the fifth measure the two middle parts must be brought out, and slight "effects" (naturally always in the *piano* shading) must not be wanting, as for example in measures 2 and 4, to enhance the charm of modulation.

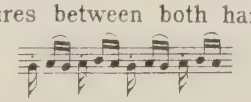
(26) In the original there are septuplets *(7)*, but, as the motion is not so quick that a rhythmic division would not be observable (this is at any rate the case with the quintuplets [5] in the bass), we have, for harmonic reasons, separated them into 3 and 4. At the same time, with the *crescendo* first beginning in this measure (to this point all is to be played in unvarying *pianissimo*) and gradually much increasing, the tempo may be accelerated up to the first *Stretta* (measure 8 of Var. XXXII).



*) B♮ and A♮ in other editions.

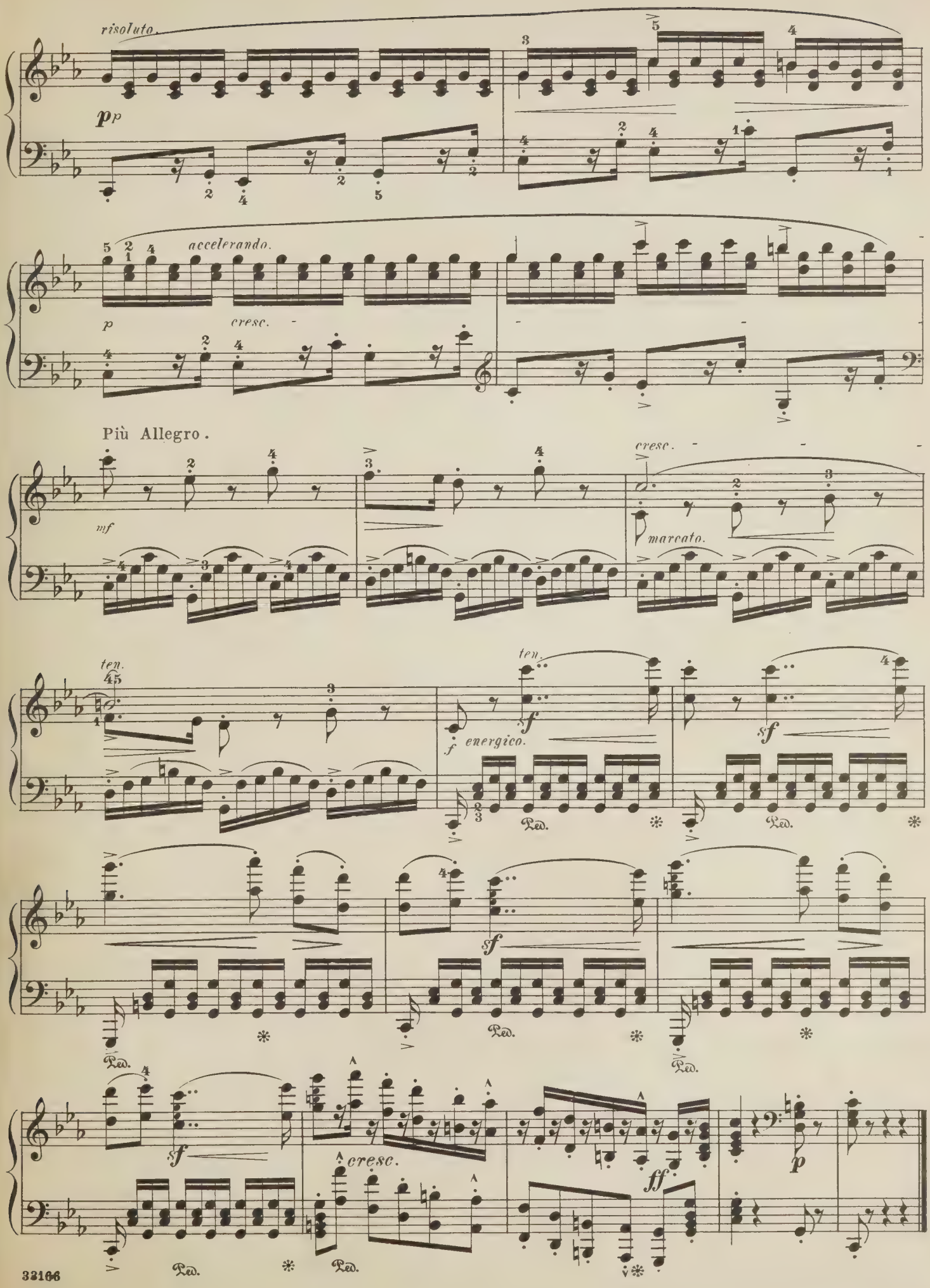


(27) The player may, if he wishes, also divide these next two measures between both hands:



(28) Taken strictly, the following could be called a thirty-third Variation; the more so, as the motive of the concluding measures is now brought to more considerable developement.

(29) A slackening of the tempo appears superfluous, as the *ritardando* has been, so to say, composed into the very rhythm,— as the third measure of the four-meas. period (see the preceding parallel passages) is spread out into two.


risoluto.
pp
accelerando.
p
cresc.
Più Allegro.
mf
cresc.
marcato.
ten.
f
energico.
sf
Ped.
cresc.
ff
p



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